May 1993

Equity Matters

University of Toronto

Status of Women Office / Office of the President

Report From the Acting Status of Women Officer

I have now spent four months as Acting Status of Women Officer and thought it would be appropriate to take this opportunity to report on the status of the Office itself and on the activities of the past four months.

The main activity for January and part of February was responding to the President's request for reactions to the Review Committee report of the Status of Women Office. The report was very positive with respect to both the past accomplishments of the Office and the continuing need for both the Office and a full-time Officer in the future. Response to the report was also positive.

Although the President did not accept all of the report's eleven recommendations, he has asked the Provost to chair a committee to advise him on the appointment of a new full-time Officer. The committee has been struck and has begun meeting. It is expected that the appointment of the new Officer will take effect on July 1, 1993.

After consultation with Jane Abray and Marilyn Van Norman (the two previous Acting Status of Women Officers), I met with the search committee to give them our sense of what characteristics the next Officer should have. Two of the items on our very long list were a high tolerance for frustration and a good sense of humour.

By the time the new permanent full-time Officer begins, the Office will have been operating on an acting and part-time basis for almost a year. The new Officer will be facing a real challenge; however, we have not been idle.

The advisory committee has continued to meet monthly and has dealt with such issues as gender equity in the Department of Athletics and Recreation, flexible child care on the Erindale and St. George campuses, employment equity policies, and the report of PACRRARI (President's Advisory Committee on Race Relations and Anti-Racism Initiatives).

I have met with numerous people on campus and have attended many, many meetings, including Personnel Policy Board, University Affairs and Academic Board, representing the Status of Women Office. Terri LeClair continues to be a mainstay of the Office, answering the large number of requests for help and information.

The Joint Status of Women Committee has also been active and was responsible (with invaluable help from Sheila Martineau) for the very successful 1993 Teach-in on Sexism and Violence Against Women. We have featured the Teach-in in this newsletter, both as a record of an important event and so that the experience can be shared with those who could not attend.

I will finish by echoing the words of Marilyn Van Norman, the previous Acting Officer. This has been an extremely interesting four months for me. It has been an extraordinary learning experience and I have met wonderful people. I expect that the next two months will continue to be rewarding. However, I look forward to welcoming the new Officer, and to the Office functioning in a more full and vital way than we have been able to manage on a part-time basis.

Rona Abramovitch.

Making Universities More Women-friendly

When the Canadian Federation of University Women set out to examine the status of women on Canadian campuses last year, they found they were not alone – universities across the country have issued no fewer than 110 reports in recent years, on topics ranging from support services and hiring practices to pay equity and gender neutral language. CFUW's report, entitled *Women in Universities: A Survey of the Status of Female Faculty and Students at Canadian Universities* [released in November 1992], includes a survey of 45 universities. The report defines a woman-friendly campus as "a place where every woman feels comfortable in living, studying, working and playing; a place where she can reach her full academic and personal potential."

Although progress is being made by Canadian universities in making their environment better for women, "the pace is slow and the focus uneven", CFUW says. "The greatest problem still is the lack of women professors", the report notes — a problem that has an impact on the mentoring of female students, representation on administrative and supervisory committees, and the lack of "female" scholarship in the curriculum. . . .

How does your university rate?
Here are some of the things the Canadian Federation of University Women says are needed to make your campus a good place for women to work, study and live:

- a parental leave policy for students
- funding for a women's centre
- a policy for gender-neutral language
- published reports of all sexual assaults
- a review of curriculum to remove bias & add a focus on women's scholarship
- zero tolerance for sexual harassment
- policies and procedures for hiring & recruiting women faculty members
- job-sharing, part-time faculty & sharing of research grants and responsibilities
- sanctions for departments that do not hire equitably
- on-campus child care services
- increased flexibility in timetables
- a safer campus

[excerpted from *University Affairs*, Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, March 1993, 10-11]

The CFUW report on Women in Universities, prepared by Mary Saunders, Ph.D., Margaret Therrien, B.N. and Linda Williams, Ph.D., draws the following conclusion: "Progress is being achieved in the struggle to eliminate barriers against women at Canadian universities. Most of the effort has been concentrated on identifying problems and proposing solutions. However, this is not new. What is needed now is action to implement reforms proposed, in many cases, by the universities' own review committees. CFUW wants to ensure this action occurs and stands ready to assist in the attainment of the goal of true equality for women at our universities."

Copies available, telephone (613) 722-8732.

THE FOURTH ANNUAL TEACH-IN ON

The Fourth Annual Teach-in on Sexism and Violence Against Women was held on March 11th at the Koffler Institute on the University of Toronto campus. Provost and Vice-President Joan Foley introduced the Keynote Speaker, Ursula Franklin, Professor Emeritus, who has been teaching in the Metallurgy and Materials Science Department of the Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering at the University of Toronto for over twenty years. Following are edited excerpts and principal points from Professor Franklin's keynote address, which set the tone for the workshops and seminars that took place throughout the afternoon.

Keynote Address: Helping Each Other to Cope & to Change Things

- Attitudes that have formed over centuries and centuries within any given culture do not change only by word or by shock or by proclamation but they also have to change by practice and, as we all know, practice is tough and there are many obstacles in the way.
- We have to continue to realize how much we need each other, that the way to change things can only be together, interactively, cooperatively, and that we cannot afford to become separated from each other. We are each other's collateral. We need each other.
- We need to combat sexism and racism, we have to illuminate and we have to name the process. We can't hide what is going on. There are no victims without perpetrators. There is no oppression without oppressors. We must support those who have the courage to speak out about their victimization and to name their offenders, to show the systemic structures that make some more prone to be the oppressors and situate others in places in which they are much more likely to be oppressed.
- Mistrust is an extraordinarily difficult thing to overcome and it is extraordinarily counterproductive to the task that we are undertaking. We must ask ourselves how we can begin to establish trust. How can we be both safe and trusting? We know that violence breeds violence but we also know that mistrust breeds mistrust and trust breeds trust.

How do we deal with sexism, with racism, with violence?

- The first step is to acknowledge the hurt, to acknowledge the pain, and to uphold the victim as a person who has been hurt. Number one is to affirm the victim's pain and to take that seriously.
- The second thing that is absolutely essential is to say that the manifestations of violence, of sexism, of racism, are things that are wrong. Violence is wrong. It is wrong. Violence is abnormal. Violence is not normal. Not only is violence not normal, it is also counterproductive because obviously it hasn't worked. The human race has developed and survived through interaction, interdependence, through cooperation. That is normal.
- Third, men and women, whether oppressors or oppressed, must talk about each other's fears. How many of those things could be eliminated and how many of those things, like wage equity or equity in advancement, are real and have to be addressed? We find it very hard to talk to each other about our fears. If we want to re-establish trust, it is important to ask the powerless what it would take if they were to trust again.

Mistrust comes from trust that has been misused.

What would it take for the powerless to trust those in power again? We need an agenda for trust-building. There is nothing that is more trust-building than equality. We need to develop a women's agenda, an agenda that says we wish we were able to trust. And in order to be able to trust, the evidence of change in certain, specific situations is needed.

I think one of the steps towards the building of trust lies in the practice of what I described earlier as my first principle, and that is to acknowledge when hurt occurs, when injustice has been done. Because one of the ways to propagate violence and injustice is to ignore it and to ignore the consequences. And the very practice of acknowledging the hurt, acknowledging the fact that something has happened that is wrong, is a big step toward rebuilding trust.

It is my firm conviction that if there is an improvement it has to come from helping each other to cope and to change and, since we are each other's collateral, an agenda for building trust is one of the things ahead of us. *Ursula Franklin.*

I want to begin with a little experience I had which stays in my mind. It was a very simple thing that could happen to anyone. I was walking along my street and in front of me was a little boy, sevenish or so, who lived on the same street. We didn't know each other by name but we had seen each other and said hello. He walked in front of me with a bag of groceries and milk. Obviously he had been sent to the store and had been given a shoddy bag -- there was this little guy trying to prevent a heavy milk bag and some bread from busting his plastic bag and trying to get home at the same time. So I caught up with him right in front of our house and said, "Look, come with me, I'll give you another bag." And I saw an expression of terror on his face because obviously he had been told to never, ever go with anybody. So I said, "Well, just stay here and I'll run into the house and get you a bag," and so I grabbed a couple of plastic bags and we repacked the milk and the bread and he had an enormous expression of relief on his face and he ran off.

Our son is an elementary teacher in a Toronto school. And there are probably no schools in Toronto without children who come from troubled homes, whether they are troubled economically, whether they are troubled because of violence against women in the home, or by other really disruptive events. And so when they begin to get some confidence in their teacher, they begin to speak and, of course, my son would encourage that. And sometimes he speaks about it and he says to me, "Mother, you know, the worst of it is, I can't even give them a hug." I mean, here is a situtation where a troubled child goes to a teacher who is a young man, who has chosen to be an elementary school teacher because he thinks that is the way in which men who were brought up in a feminist home with a father who was supportive can bring this to the young. And yet he is not able to find a way that allows this and does not forbid it. When you go through teachers' training today and you are a young man teaching elementary grades, you don't touch the children, and you don't give them a hug, even when they desperately need it.

Workshops, Seminars and Displays

Women's Sport and Violence: Making Connections

This workshop on women and sports was given by Professor Helen Lenskyj, a sociologist at OISE who is cross-appointed to Physical and Health Education. Her message is that women's presence in sports challenges the balance of power since the culture teaches women to be anti-

sport and anti-body and teaches men to be pro-sport and pro-violence.

Based on her own research, Lenskyj discussed such interrelated issues as women's anxiety about femininity and sexuality; the continuum from sexual harassment to sexual assault; homophobic and racist attitudes and acts within sport; the connections recently made between sport, wife assault, and sex-related crimes; and the coercive power of coaches who are usually privileged by sex, race, class and age.

Balancing Acts: Juggling Family, Study, Work and Activism

This workshop was facilitated by Ruth Perkins of the GSU and took the form of a panel discussion during which Rose Marie Harrop (Counselling & Learning Skills Service), Joanne Kacaba (School of Graduate Studies) and Claudia Vicencio (graduate student in Anthropology) described their histories and struggles.

They all expressed their desire to engage fully in all aspects of life and described what they do to balance the demands made on them. Some highlights of their presentations were:

- learn to ask for and accept help from others without feeling guilty
- build networks to obtain support from family and friends
- connect together studies and work to save research time
- appreciate that you are a good role model for your children & your work contributes to their future well-being
- decide what to give up in the short term
- acknowledge the personal is political and vice-versa

and finally, try to get a good night's sleep at all times!

Inequity in the Classroom

This workshop, facilitated by Allison Hudgins and Rhonda Love (UTFA), involved the presentation and discussion of a video called "Inequity in the Classroom" which was produced by Concordia University. The video discusses research done by Myra and David Sadker regarding high school classroom practices that provide an unequal learning environment for certain student groups. These practices and patterns are replicated at the university level.

The Sadkers researched items like wait-time, distribution of teacher attention, and the difference in reaction to different types of students. For example, their research showed that males are eight times more likely than females to call out an answer in class; teachers are twice as likely to have extended conversations in class with male students as opposed to female students; and teachers are twice as likely to give detailed instructions for specific tasks to male students than female – indeed, they often do the task for the female student.

The video goes on to discuss the effect that uneven teacher attention has on student performance and the fact that students who receive attention are more likely to perform well. The Sadkers explain that the differentiation in treatment may in large part be a result of the fact that males are socialized to grab attention in ways that females are not; they go on to suggest concrete ways to redress the imbalance, such as increasing wait-time after you ask a question, monitoring the distribution of your attention in class and actively redistributing attention to students that are receiving less.

For short term video loans call 978-3351.

Anti-Racism Workshop

This workshop, organized by Sandra Gardner, was held separately on March 22nd and was attended by approximately 30 people with a good mix of students, staff and faculty (mostly women). The facilitators, Milagros Paredes and Rhonda Hackett, created a safe environment for the participants to discuss the issue of racism and other related issues such as sexism and homophobia.

The facilitators assumed that everyone attending the workshop understood racism and, therefore, they focused their efforts on describing what the barriers were in combating racism and how to overcome these barriers.

Paredes and Hackett encouraged all those attending to participate in exercises and discussions which helped to illustrate the similarities and differences amongst people. For example, people located themselves on a map of the world and then shared with the group why they chose that particular spot.

The group developed a list of barriers to dealing with racism in their own lives; two examples were the fear of confrontation and the fear of other people's power to affect their lives.

The workshop ended with individuals making a commitment to do something to address racism in the next three months. Some people chose to read a book on Native culture in Canada or a book on how to handle confrontations, and others chose to actually confront someone in their lives about their racist attitudes or comments.

Additional Workshops

There were several additional workshops that altogether provided a diverse and interesting range of topics that addressed sexism and violence against women.

Bob Shantz, University Chaplain, conducted an informal discussion group on "Men and women talking about what it means to be men and women in 1993." His workshop dealt with such issues as gender bias in the workplace and violence against women as well as how men and women do or do not communicate with each other.

Jon Alexander and his parents, Gaye and Bob Alexander, gave an enlightening and emotional talk on "Both Sides Now: A Mother, Father and Son Discuss Sexism and Misogyny" as it has affected their lives as a family and as individuals. They described how their changing roles in relation to one another over the years have both maintained and challenged patriarchy in our society.

Patricia Grant (from Special Services to Persons with a Disability) put together a dramatized presentation of "Writings By Women With Disabilities", poignantly pointing out that disabled women experience a higher degree of discrimination and violence than most women. DAWN, the Disabled Women's Network, was also present with information about their work on behalf of women with disabilities.

Carol Couchie, a student at the University of Toronto, held a workshop entitled "Healing the Sacred Hoop: Empowerment Over Oppression." She conducted a First Nations opening ceremony ritual and presented the traditional aboriginal healing circle.

Two workshops on sexual assault – "Working Together to End Violence Against Women" and "The Assault Support Program: Expanding Services to Assaulted Women" – were given by the Catharsis Group International (sponsored by the Women's Centre) and by Andrea Calver and Sherry Jackson, respectively. The Catharsis Group was facilitated by Aysun Basaran. The Assault Support Program is designed to offer information, support and advocacy to assaulted women who choose to become involved in the criminal justice process or internal university procedures.

Beverley Richardson (Department of Medicine) and Rhonda Love (Department of Behavioural Science) gave a joint seminar on "Women's Health Issues." Dr. Richardson discussed the medicalization of women's health issues and Dr. Love talked about women as second-class citizens in medical research.

The Women's Studies Programme

When I was asked by the Principal of New College, at the request of the Women's Studies Programme members, to fill in as Acting Director for the 1992-93 year, I was startled, amazed and (eventually) intrigued enough to say yes – as startled as most people have been this year when they hear that a man is currently a director of the Programme. However, there is a (rather ancient) precedent for this in that the first director of the Programme back in the 70's was a man, Professor Ronald De Sousa; but whatever the reason, I am pleased to report that I have experienced virtually no static and certainly none from within the Programme itself. The Women's Studies Programme is a vibrant, challenging and popular Programme with a talented, dedicated and incredibly overworked core staff of instructors and I am grateful to them for habing enjoyed so thoroughly my year with them and the Programme.

Thinking back over the year, what strikes me most forcibly is that the Programme is now suffering from the limitations of institutional structures, a phase that most Women's Studies Programmes have had to contend with, no doubt, as they become established. The Programme has stretched in a number of ways beyond the comfortable confines of an arts and science undergraduate programme – to the point where its structure frequently hampers rather than he;ps it fo fulfil its madate. The Programme's Director and, therefore, the Programme is, for example, separated by several levels of bureaucracy from the resources it needs and merits from the University. Consequently many simple but crucial operations are made unnecessarily cumbersome.

In terms of attracting students, the Programme is doing extremely well. This year we have 2563 course enrolments, of which 555 are enrolments in our core courses. In 1985 the Programme had just 15 Programme enrolments (specialists, majors and minors); today it has 110 – more than some arts and science departments. And all this with the minuscule total of 2.25 instructors actually appointed into the Programme. The rest of the teaching has to be done by part-time lecturers on stipend – brilliant and invaluable instructors most of them, without whom we could not possibly operate – who are not part of an ongoing system which assures the Programme's stability and consistency, thus affording the instructors concerned only marginal career opportunities.

Ironically, these problems will be exacerbated by the introduction of a graduate Women's Studies Programme, a necessary step if Women's Studies at the University of Toronto are not to be relegated to tertiary status in the international field of Women's Studies scholarship. Strongly and publicly endorsed by President Prichard, negotiations to establish such a Programme are currently underway within the graduate school and departments. But the catch in all of this is that when the eagerly awaited graduate program comes into being, there will be no institutional link between it and the already existing undergraduate programme unless the current structures are altered.

This series of problems takes its place within a range of fascinating challenges facing the Woem's Studies Programme as it goes into its third decade at the University of Toronto. I know my successor, Professor Heather Murrary (Department of English), will be more than up to them. I wish her every success in this exciting position.

Peter Dyson.

Women's Studies Resource Directory

The first issue of the Women's Studies Resource Directory for the 1992-93 academic year has now been widely distributed, both on and off campus. The Directory contains a broad listing of courses that are cross-listed with faculty as well as a compendium of women's studies research resources. We hope that it will be of value to undergraduate and graduate students, post-doctoral fellows, librarians, faculty, administrators, visitors, and researchers affiliated with the University of Toronto. We believe that the Directory presents striking documentation of the breadth, vitality and vibrancy of academic interest in women's studies at the University of Toronto.

Curriculum Resources

In order to produce a comprehensive survey of undergraduate and graduate courses which have women, gender or sex roles as a primary focus, I have defined "women's studies" very broadly rather than presuming to impose an *a priori* monolithic definition upon curricula.

Faculty Resources

Faculty are cross-listed in conjunction with courses being taught during the 1992-93 academic year. Recognizing that teaching assignments vary from year to year, we have provided a preliminary listing of faculty and their research interests which we anticipate will grow from year to year and will be expanded to include faculty who are not teaching in any one particular academic year.

Institutional Resources

Institutional recognition of and support for women's studies is crucial to effective teaching and the advancement of research in women's studies. Listed under Institutional Resources are undergraduate and graduate programs in women's studies; scholarships and fellowships; research resources (abstracts, indices, and bibliographies as well as libraries and research centres); academic women's studies research organizations; reports and academic initiatives involving women's studies; and various supportive services provided by individuals and groups, such as the Women's Centre, the Women's Caucus of the Graduate Students' Union, the Sexual Harassment Officer, the Gender Issues Committee in the Faculty of Medicine, and the Status of Women Office in the Office of the President.

If you would like to receive a copy of the Women's Studies Resource Directory, please contact Terri LeClair at the Status of Women Office (978-2196).

Kathryn Morgan.

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